

A FORM FOR THE SETTING APART
OF
DEACONESSSES

IN
THE DIOCESE OF PENNSYLVANIA.

¶ *All things being in readiness, a Priest shall present to the Bishop sitting in his chair, near to the Holy Table, such as are to be set apart as Deaconesses, saying:*

REVEREND Father in God, I present unto you these women [*or this woman*], to be set apart to the office and work of Deaconess.

The Bishop.

Declare, we pray you, unto those who are here gathered what the office and work of a Deaconess are.

¶ *Then shall the Priest, addressing the People, say:*

DEARLY beloved, it is written in the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, that while the Lord Jesus was going about through cities and villages, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God, there were women not a few which ministered unto him of their substance. Likewise, after he was crucified (as the same Evangelist hath elsewhere told us), the women which came with him from Galilee were emboldened to follow after them that carried his body to the

burial, and to prepare spices and ointments. Also that it is agreeable to the mind of Christ that women should do him service by offices of loving kindness, we gather from St. Paul, who saith to the Philip-pians, Help those women which labored with me in the Gospel. And who also commendeth unto the Romans, one Phebe, a Deaconess of the Church which was at Cenchrea.

Touching the duty of women set apart to this office and ministry, the Canons of the Church affirm that it is to assist the Minister in the care of the poor and sick, in the religious training of the young and others, and in the work of moral reformation. That *they* may be duly appointed to such service, *have these women* come hither.

¶ *Then shall the Bishop say as followeth:*

BELOVED, we have good confidence that *they* who *are* now presented to be set apart to the office of Deaconess *are* competent thereto, for it hath been so certified unto us, as the Canons require, by them whose word we trust. Nevertheless, if there be any who can allege aught on account of which it is inexpedient that any of *these persons* be so set apart, let protest be now made openly and before all men.

¶ *If no good reason be alleged by any why the service should not proceed, then shall the Bishop say:*

Let thy merciful kindness, O Lord, be upon us.

Answer. Like as we do put our trust in thee.

¶ *Then, all kneeling down, the Bishop shall say:*

Unto thee lift we up our eyes;

Answer. O Thou that dwellest in the heavens.

Bishop. As the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters;

Answer. And as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress;

Bishop. Even so our eyes wait upon thee, O Lord;

Answer. Until thou have mercy upon us.

Bishop. O Lord, have mercy upon us.

Answer. Have mercy upon us.

Bishop. O Lord, let thy mercy lighten upon us;

Answer. As our trust is in thee.

The Bishop.

O ETERNAL God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Creator of man and woman; who didst anoint with the Spirit, Miriam and Deborah and Anna and Huldah; who didst not disdain that thine only begotten Son should be born of a woman; who, also, in the tabernacle of the testimony and in the temple, didst ordain women to be keepers of thy holy gates; Look mercifully, we beseech thee, upon *these* thy *servants*, about to be set apart to the office and work of Deaconess. Protect them in the way wherein they go, and grant that in singleness of purpose and with a willing mind *they* may worthily accomplish the task committed to *them*, to thy glory and to the praise of thy Christ, to whom with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Ghost, be glory and worship for ever and ever. *Amen.*

¶ *Then shall he add:*

O magnify the Lord with me.

Answer. And let us exalt his name together.

¶ *Then, all standing up, shall be said:*

We will praise thy name, O God, with a song.

Answer. And magnify it with thanksgiving.

Bishop. O give thanks unto the God of heaven.

Answer. For his mercy endureth forever.

Bishop. O give thanks unto the Lord of Lords.

Answer. For his mercy endureth forever.

¶ *Then shall be sung or said the Hymn called Magnificat, as followeth:*

Magnificat. St. Luke i. 46.

MY soul doth magnify the Lord: and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

For he hath regarded: the lowliness of his handmaiden.

For behold, from henceforth: all generations shall call me blessed.

For he that is mighty hath magnified me: and holy is his Name.

And his mercy is on them that fear him: throughout all generations.

He hath showed strength with his arm: he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat: and hath exalted the humble and meek.

He hath filled the hungry with good things: and the rich he hath sent empty away.

He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel: as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed, for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

¶ *Then shall the Bishop ask of them the following questions, to which each candidate shall answer for herself.*

The Bishop.

HAVE you well considered in your own mind your purpose to serve God in this office and ministry?

Answer. I have so considered it.

The Bishop.

WILL you endeavor, so long as you shall hold this office, faithfully to fulfill the duties of the same without fickleness or waywardness?

Answer. I will.

The Bishop.

WILL you diligently ask of God the grace to enable you to cling to this endeavor, and to make this purpose good?

Answer. I will.

The Bishop.

WILL you reverently obey your Bishop, and other chief Ministers, who, according to the Canons of the Church, may have the charge and government over you: following with a glad mind and will their godly admonitions?

Answer. I will endeavor so to do, the Lord being my helper.

¶ *Then the Bishop, laying his hands severally upon the head of every one of them kneeling before him, shall say:*

TAKE thou authority to exercise the office of a Deaconess in the Church of God, whereunto thou art now set apart.

Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter. The Lord recompense thy word, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust. Amen.

The Bishop.

The Lord be with you.

Answer. And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

¶ *Then, all kneeling down, the Bishop shall say these Prayers following.*

For the Deaconesses newly set apart:

O GOD, who, in thy holy Word, dost commend above all goodly apparel the ornament of a quiet spirit; Adorn, we beseech thee, *these* thy servants, with the meekness and the gentleness of Christ. Preserve *them* alike from faithless fears and from unreasonable desires, that with a steadfast heart and settled purpose *they* may run the way of thy commandments, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For such as are in Need and Necessity:

O GOD, Almighty and merciful, who healest those that are broken in heart, and turnest the sadness of the sorrowful to joy; Let thy fatherly goodness be upon all that thou hast made. Especially we beseech thee to remember in pity such as are destitute, homeless, or forgotten of their fellow-men. Bless the congregation of thy poor. Uplift those who are cast down. Mightily befriend innocent sufferers, and sanctify to them the endurance of their wrongs. Cheer with hope all discouraged and unhappy people, and by thy heavenly grace preserve from falling those whose penury tempteth them to sin; though they be troubled on every side, suffer them not to be distressed; though they be perplexed, save them from despair. Grant this, O Lord, for the love of him who for our sakes became poor, thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

For final Blessedness:

ALMIGHTY and eternal God, to whom is never any prayer made without hope of mercy; Bow thine ear, we beseech thee, to our supplications, and in the heavenly city cause us to be united with thy faithful servants, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Rom. xv: 13.

THE God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, that we may abound in hope, through our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Authorization.

The above FORM FOR THE SETTING APART OF DEACONESSES is hereby authorized, and set forth for use in the Diocese of Pennsylvania, in accordance with the provisions of Title I, Canon 13, of the Digest.

O. W. WHITAKER,

Bishop of the Diocese of Pennsylvania.

Feast of the Epiphany.

MDCCCXCV.